

## Household Assessments

Assemblyman Charles E. Chapel of Redondo Beach has for the past 14 years consistently advocated eliminating the assessment and taxation of household furniture and personal effects in private residences. As a member of the Assembly Interim Committee on Revenue and Taxation, he heard Los Angeles County Assessor Philip E. Watson testify on November 15, 1963 that he also favored such action.

Assessor Watson testified at the time that he considered this tax in the "nature of a nuisance" and asserted it does not yield enough revenue to justify its continuance. He stated that almost ten per cent of the budget in the Assessor's office in Los Angeles County is devoted under the present system to household assessments and "less than one per cent of the total revenue from ad valorem property taxation is derived therefrom."

Historically, most of the assessors in California have opposed elimination of the household property assessment, consistently maintaining that erosion of the tax base must be prevented.

Because 1964 is a budget year, all revenue bills must first have the approval of the governor before they may be introduced during the session. This may preclude any action this year; but, the determined Mr. Chapel can be depended upon to see that such a bill is given a chance for serious consideration in 1965. And he can probably count on continued effective support from the very capable and forceful Philip E. Watson.

## National YMCA Week

The total of "Weeks" and "Days" which we are supposed to observe each year almost approaches infinity. Some of these can be fairly called ridiculous. But there is a goodly number which deserve the fullest recognition—and National YMCA Week, January 19-26, is most certainly one of this honorable company.

There are more than 1800 Y's across this broad land of ours, and in only 20 years the membership has doubled and reached the record figure of 3,880,000. Some 500,000 volunteer leaders—over 100 for each professional worker—today direct clubs and groups, serve on boards and committees, raise funds, secure new members, and enable the YMCA to carry out its tasks for the very modest fees charged its members.

What do the Y's offer? The answer is: Many things which make our lives healthier, happier and more meaningful. Among them: The father-son movement; health and physical fitness work; the promotion of water safety; sports and athletics; service to members of the armed services; educational courses covering a wide variety of fields; and so on down a lengthy and distinguished list. And many of its activities were the result of the organization's own inventiveness and pioneering.

The YMCA offers programs for all members of the family. Its purpose is to serve any person regardless of his ability to pay, and no one is turned away because of lack of finances. No organization more thoroughly deserves a week in its honor.

## Must Be Vigilant

What happens when a refugee comes here from a subjugated part of the world? He often kisses the earth of the good old United States and vows he will be forever grateful for his freedom. This is the first reaction—but what transpires after the initial feeling of ecstasy?

Most Americans or their ancestors came from oppressed lands. As time passes, too many of them, through indifference, add fuel to the flame that fired government domination in the lands of their forebears.

A lady and her son recently visited East Germany. One thing a relative there impressed on the son was, "take your politics seriously or you will lose your freedom like we have here." He told the boy that lack of interest in government is what brought about their subjugation. This incident brings home the danger of lack of interest in government.

It takes effort to preserve freedom, otherwise power-hungry minority groups gain control. Vigilance is the only weapon able to block such infiltration.

Political groups seek power by using the government as a gift bag. Unless the people are alert to such methods which were used in Europe, and are now being promoted in the United States, they will find themselves burdened with a bureaucratic yoke and unable to free themselves.

We Americans as a whole have high ideals, generous hearts and great energy. We must be vigilant to preserve freedom for ourselves and those who will follow.

## Opinions of Others

ALAMOSA, COLO., VALLEY COURIER: "Now that gangster-murderer Joseph Valachi has sung his swan song in the criminal world before a senate investigating committee, what next? It remains now to be seen if the cost of the Valachi investigation is to be justified by follow-up action or if the whole matter is to be white-washed as so many investigations have been in the past. . . . More disturbing is the natural deduction from all this that the criminal world in our country is more powerful than the forces of law and order."

ONTARIO, CALIF., REPORT: "Who uses seat belts in cars? Smart people, that's who."

CUERO, TEX., RECORD: "We are now in a tight competitive position, with several leading industrial countries. Automation should enable us to pay our workers more, because they will produce more, and maintain our high standard of living. This is the normal development in our specialty—mass production, and mass production has enabled us to achieve the standards we now enjoy."

## Faces In The Mob



ROYCE BRIER

## De Gaulle Says All Is Well With France

President De Gaulle sat down at his typewriter recently and composed a fairly brief report to the nation.

He said France would continue toward development of the hydrogen bomb, that the hydrogen bomb is about the only weapon that will provide security for a great power. He didn't mention his dilemma — he didn't need to — that he could not sign the test ban treaty and have a hydrogen bomb, too. Most experts think he can get the bomb this year.

M. de Gaulle then went on to congratulate the French people on achieving peace in 1963. It was about the first year they have known full peace since 1939. He said the country is in fine shape, prosperous and politically stable. He defended his veto of Britain's membership in the Common Market, saying such membership would dissolve the Market because Britain was not in a position to meet its terms.

What he meant was that he would prefer to make the

terms for the Common Market because he intends that France shall establish its leadership of the Continent.

This is quite in keeping with his concept of himself, and of France. Further, it is in keeping with French history, and we may be sure the majority of Frenchmen are in accord with him. Since the days of the Plantagenets, the French have resented Englishmen in Europe. Only in their extremity have Frenchmen accepted English aid in their European wars (and it need not be said this aid was never disinterested).

Now M. de Gaulle is equally disturbed by the presence of American military power in Europe. It was acceptable enough when the chips were down, but lately de Gaulle has judged that the chips are no longer down. Moreover, he doesn't think the United States will stay in Europe if the chips are down again in a nuclear age. The late President Kennedy's reassurance on this point never impressed M. de Gaulle.

This President De Gaulle

## FROM the MAILBOX

### States Opposition To Tax

With the election for the pending school tax just around the corner and with the argument for this measure now in the homes of the electorate of Torrance, it is only fair and equitable that the proposal be put to the test of facing the opposition.

Of course we who have children in the Torrance schools want our children to have the best we can offer, but money does not necessarily assure that this shall come to pass, in fact the assurance of finances often leads to the abandonment of husbandry and we find ourselves paying through the nose for inferiority.

Before writing this letter I had an hour-long consultation with Mr. Waldrip of the school district's finance department. This to assure myself that I wouldn't just be whistling Dixie. In addition to the following matters, we discussed the low level of standards in our schools, such as graduating non-readers from both elementary and high schools, to which he replied, "If you were informed you would know that Sweden has adopted our methods of education." It is unbelievable that a man in his position would boast that a country which is second to USSR in complete socialization and has the highest rate of suicides in the world had found the methods used in our schools so much to their liking.

Because I realize a newspaper often cannot take sides in an issue such as this, I am writing this in the hope that

it shall set people to thinking; this is in the fond hope that you will be able to find a spot you don't know what to do with and that you see your way clear to print it.

We shall now have the argument for the tax election to be held Feb. 4, 1964, and now is the time to really take a close look at it and consider the following:

There is no stipulation as to the specific use to which these new tax revenues shall be put.

They shall NOT be used for construction, this is merely for operating expenses. These monies can be used for increasing of salaries of school administrators or any other purpose whether it is directly related to educating our children or not.

The statement regarding 207 teachers, etc., is merely a statement of comparison indicating that the salaries of these people only represent the amount of revenue they have stipulated is needed. It does not mean that if the measure fails these individuals shall be dropped. This statement is too easily misread; it is confusing in its wording.

The reduction of income from industry is a reduction in tax rate not on the 'overall' industry, etc. — Again we find the wording such as to make a quick reading misleading.

We must also remember there shall be additional revenue from the apartments and homes which are being constructed.

The board is asking for this tax increase for a period of

five years. This is an increase of 7.5 per cent over the last school tax issue. (That is 50c for 3 years as against 40c for 5 years now being asked for.)

That statement that the State is falling behind in supporting the schools does not mean that there is a cut in the offing, the rate has been the same since 1954. — This again is so written as to invite misinterpretation.

Why is it that the tremendously expensive high school gym and equipment are used to a minimum insofar as fitness is concerned, and why is there no fitness program whatsoever in our elementary schools if our schools are as good as the administrators claim them to be? . . . It is most unseemly that an appeal for school funds is made with innuendoes and statements so worded as to be, by the casual reader, misinterpreted. If funds are so badly needed the facts could be stated without any cheap political tactics or vague inferences. They should be clearly stated, no more is necessary. It seems that the voter is assumed to be ill informed and so apathetic that he can be made to vote YES at the very sound of the word education.

As things stand, we are being asked to write a check for operating expenses, a term so vague and all encompassing it covers anything, in fact there is no assurance that even half of it shall go directly to the educating of our children. This money shall be entrusted to the board already plagued by dissension, and

## AFTER HOURS By John Morley

### Finds Berlin Unlike Any City in the World

BERLIN — It was here in Berlin that I had my first news beat in 1931, two years before Hitler burned the Reichstag and took over Germany.

Those were the days of Sinclair Lewis and Dorothy Thompson . . . Bill Shirer . . . and my old friend, H. R. Knickerbocker of the Herald-Tribune, who was killed in a plane crash in India in 1951. It was Red Knick and Edgar Ansel Mowrer of the Chicago Daily News who gave me my start.

I have been back to Berlin many times since . . . perhaps a dozen times since the war. Not only the appearance but the heart and soul of Berlin is changing rapidly. So is the whole world I cover.

But Berlin is unlike any other city in the world. For no other city in the world is divided in the middle by a wall.

A wall that broadcasts daily to the world that communism has failed. For that's what the Communist wall is doing as each visitor approaches it along its drab and tragic 32-mile trail along the River Spree.

I drove and walked the trail along the wall again today. Here's what I saw.

It was 2 a.m., Aug. 16, 1961, when floodlights and workmen appeared with loaded trucks to start the wall and test our nerve.

It began over four short blocks at the end of Tiergarten, Berlin's once famous park, and was less than four feet tall. Then came the large concrete slabs, brick and the trim at the top of barbed wire and broken glass.

Today in many places there are two walls separated by about 20 feet of mined land, floodlights and guard houses every few hundred feet. Some 13,000 Communist guards are needed to patrol the 32 miles . . . and even at that, a hundred or so escape each month.

A contractor Rotary friend told me that the Communists could have built dwellings for 15,000 homeless Germans with the material required to build the wall.

There are two Berlins . . . physically, economically and psychologically.

East Berlin is literally a concentration camp, in every sense of the word . . . West Berlin is a sector where everyone breathes free air and all that it implies.

The difference is immense. No West German can cross into East Berlin, but foreigners are permitted to visit for limited periods.

I went across and spent the day in the East. I saw the familiar S-Bahn (Red electric trains) speeding on the elevated tracks.

Berlin is the only city in the world today where its subway trains travel mostly over elevated tracks. The S-Bahn was void of passengers as it travels also in the West Berlin sector.

The West Berliners have been boycotting the Communist controlled S-Bahn, under the Potsdam agreement, even when it runs in West Berlin. This is another symbol of West German defiance.

All the border guards in East Berlin are Germans, not Russians. This is a precautionary measure, for the Germans hate the Russian Communists.

The guards work in pairs to foil escapes . . . and they are changed daily so that one guard is unable to determine the loyalty of the other at such short intervals. Yet many guards escape each week.

The contrast, as you stand on a platform at Checkpoint Charlie and glance at both sides is amazing. Two kinds of apartments face each other . . . drab and dilapidated on the East . . . beautiful new and modern in the West.

should the next election put into office another board member, who, like Mrs. Watts, supports the superintendent, we shall be where we were before "Clean Sweep" removed the old board.

What is your verdict? Your truly, (Mrs.) Alvin J. Drehman, 4818 Reese Road, Torrance, Calif.

West Berliners along the wall are really pouring it on. Their apartment balconies are covered with flowers, lanterns and brightly-lighted lamps and with flags at half mast . . . as a living memorial to their oppressed countrymen in the Eastern zone.

One West Berliner told me that his father and mother across the wall take heart and hope at the sight of flowers and lights.

I returned to the wall again on Sunday morning and the church bells striking in unison all along the Western sector was an inspiring experience.

There were no church bells in the East, but the hundreds of waving handkerchiefs from the windows and roof tops

was echo enough. No one, not even the Reds, could avoid its meaning.

The rumor in Berlin is that the Communists have regretted the wall, for the loss of face it implies. They regret it also for it has hurt the East Berlin economy.

Some 75,000 East Germans used to cross each day to work in the West and bring back badly needed western marks. Since the wall, no worker crosses over.

The wall has antagonized most Germans on both sides, because of separation of families. This has been aggravated by the latest order erecting high cardboard walls well inside the East sector, so relatives can no longer see each other across the Berlin wall.

## Our Man Hoppe

### As an Example, Fire Teacher!

—Art Hoppe

All over the country hirsute young males keep getting fired because their personal grooming habits "set a bad example" for our beardless youths.

As the alarmed parent of small children myself, I've made a personal investigation of our schools. And it is with shock and horror that I must report the situation is far, far worse than we dreamed. It isn't a mere handful of our nation's teachers whose grooming sets an appalling example for our innocent children. It is, according to my statistics, 99.8 per cent!

Take our male teachers. Do you realize that virtually every male elementary school teacher in the country spends from three to nine minutes daily scraping hair off his face? Of a total of 65,700 to 197,100 minutes during his lifetime? Is this any kind of example to set for productive use of leisure time?

Do I want my small son devoting three to ten minutes a day scraping his face in the bathroom. When we have only one bathroom? And you have to wait to get in there in the morning as it is? Of course not.

And clothing! Let us gloss over the universal habit of our male teachers in tying strips of brightly colored cloth around their necks. After all, this will only instill in our children an appreciation of foolish vanity. And while this may well sap their character, it isn't physically harmful. Like jackets.

Male teachers, my study shows, inexplicably insist on wearing jackets on even the warmest days. I'm sure I needn't point out the danger to any parent whose boy plays pinky or capture-the-flag in the hot sun. Heat stroke is everywhere.

So much for the odd grooming habits of our male teachers. Let us now turn to the females. With a shudder.

Frighteningly, statistics show most of our small children's teachers are female. And to think that when it comes to grooming, they are the models our school board wish our sons to emulate!

Oh, that my tad should ever smear red grease on his lips. Or paint his eyelids blue. Or waste long hours plucking selected hairs from his eyebrows. Or wear worthlessly-thin plastic stockings in chilly weather or dangerously-wobbly pointed heels. Particularly when playing football.

Yes, you will say, but at least there are white-haired schoolmarmers who wear sensible shoes and don't laquer their fingertips. Wrong. Actually, research shows all white-haired schoolmarmers now dye their hair. Only they don't dye it white. They dye it a very pale blue. And I ask you, could I, as a father, be proud of a son with pale blue hair?

Well, I don't wish to attack any citizen for being vain, foolish, insane, wasteful and irrational in his grooming. That is the inalienable right of us all. But with teachers it's different. They are the models for our upcoming generation. We must weed out those with illogical habits. And as a start, I say let's sack every male teacher in the country who doesn't wear a beard.

Indeed, the only conceivable argument against bearded teachers as models for our youth is an emotional one: "Do you want your little boy to wear a beard?"

Well, to tell the truth, I'm not keen on it. But I don't want him crowding up the bathroom in the mornings either.

## Morning Report:

January is the month for forward-looking pundits, make no mistake about it. In fact the new year is already so well chronicled that anything that happens will be an anti-climax.

Business will be great. Look at car-loadings. Business will be bad. Look at unemployment. Khrushchev's replacement has been picked. He is weary at 69. Khrushchev's replacement has not been picked. The old man was never more vigorous. President Johnson has picked his vice-president He is McCarthy, Humphrey, Shriver, Brown, Kennedy, and Wagner. The GOP nomination is settled. It's Goldwater, Lodge, Nixon, Romney, Scranton and Dark Horse.

Anyway, I predicted it first.

Abe Mellinkoff